

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A lancet having a pre-use and a post-use configuration, said lancet comprising:

a lancet body having a distal end and a needle piercing tip projecting from said distal end;

a cap, said cap in a pre-use configuration connected to said distal end with said piercing tip embedded therein by a frangible junction, said cap comprising an opening sized for mating engagement with said lancet distal end;

an interior axially projecting post disposed within said opening of said cap, whereby said needle piercing tip is embedded within said interior axially projecting post in said pre-use configuration;

said cap having at least one tab member projecting therefrom;

wherein in a post-use configuration said frangible junction is broken and said cap is mounted onto said lancet body with said opening of said cap receiving ~~defines an opening sized for mating engagement with said lancet distal end and an interior axially projecting hub for receiving~~ at least a portion of said piercing tip embedded within said interior axially projecting post therein when said cap is placed on said lancet distal end.

2. (original) A lancet according to claim 1, wherein said cap is generally cylindrical and includes first and second diametrically opposed radially projecting tabs.

3. (original) A lancet according to claim 1, wherein said cap defines an opening sized for

mating engagement with said lancet distal end and an interior shoulder providing a stop upon engagement with said lancet distal end.

4. (canceled)

5. (currently amended) A lancet comprising:

a lancet body having a distal end and a piercing tip projecting from said distal end;

a cap connected to said distal end with said piercing tip embedded therein by a frangible junction, said cap comprising an opening ~~sized for mating engagement with said lancet distal end, said opening~~ facing in the distal direction away from said lancet body, said cap separable from said lancet body at said frangible junction such that said piercing tip is exposed; prior to separation of said frangible junction and removal of said cap from said lancet body

whereby upon separation of said cap from said lancet body said cap is positionable upon said distal end of said lancet body such that said opening receives said distal end and said piercing tip is embedded in said cap.

6. (previously presented) The lancet of claim 5, wherein said cap is generally cylindrical and further comprises first and second diametrically opposed radially projecting tabs.

7. (previously presented) The lancet of claim 6, wherein said cap further comprises an interior shoulder providing a stop upon engagement with said lancet distal end.

8. (currently amended) The lancet of claim 5, wherein said cap further comprises an interior axially projecting ~~post~~ hub disposed within said opening for receiving at least a portion of said piercing tip embedded therein both when said cap is connected to said distal end and when said cap is positioned with said distal end received by said opening ~~when said cap is removed from said lancet body, reversed and said opening is matingly engaged with said lancet distal end.~~

9. (previously presented) The lancet of claim 8, wherein said cap is generally cylindrical and further comprises first and second diametrically opposed radially projecting tabs.

10. (previously presented) The lancet of claim 9, wherein said cap further comprises an interior shoulder providing a stop upon engagement with said lancet distal end.

11. (currently amended) A lancet comprising:

an elongated lancet body having a distal end;

a shaft disposed within said lancet body, said shaft comprising a piercing tip projecting from said distal end of said lancet body; and

a removable cap having a first position connected to said distal end of said lancet body by a frangible junction with said piercing tip embedded within said frangible junction ~~therein by a frangible junction~~, said cap comprising a generally cylindrical opening ~~sized for mating engagement with said lancet distal end, said opening~~ coaxially aligned with said shaft and facing in the distal direction away from said lancet body ~~prior to separation of said frangible junction and removal of said cap from said lancet body~~

said cap being removable from said lancet body by destruction of said frangible junction,
whereby said cap has a second position such that said opening of said cap is facing toward said
lancet body such that said distal end of said lancet body is received by said opening and said
piercing tip is embedded in said cap.

12. (canceled)

13. (previously presented) The lancet of claim 11, wherein said cap further comprises at least one tab member projecting therefrom.

14. (previously presented) The lancet of claim 11, wherein said cap further comprises first and second diametrically opposed radially projecting tabs.

15. (currently amended) The lancet of claim 11, wherein said cap further comprises an interior axially projecting post ~~hub~~ disposed within said opening for receiving at least a portion of said piercing tip embedded therein when said cap is in either said first or said second position ~~removed from said lancet body, reversed and said opening is matingly engaged with said lancet distal end.~~

16. (canceled)

17. (currently amended) The lancet of claim 14, wherein said cap further comprises an interior axially projecting post ~~hub~~ disposed within said opening for receiving at least a portion

of said piercing tip embedded therein when said cap is in either said first or said second position
~~removed from said lancet body, reversed and said opening is matingly engaged with said lancet~~
~~distal end.~~

18. (currently amended) A lancet comprising:

an elongated lancet body having a distal end;

a shaft disposed within said lancet body, said shaft comprising a piercing tip projecting
from said distal end of said lancet body;

a removable cap connected to said distal end of said lancet body by a frangible junction
with said piercing tip embedded therein ~~by a frangible junction~~, said cap comprising a generally
cylindrical opening ~~sized for mating engagement with said lancet distal end~~, said cap being
generally cylindrical and coaxially aligned with said shaft prior to separation of said frangible
junction and removal of said cap from said lancet body; and

at least one tab member projecting radially from said cap member.

19. (previously presented) The lancet of claim 18, said at least one tab member comprising
first and second diametrically opposed radially projecting tabs.

20. (previously presented) The lancet of claim 19, said opening being coaxially aligned with
said shaft prior to separation of said frangible junction and removal of said cap from said lancet
body.

21. (currently amended) The lancet of claim 20, wherein said cap further comprises an interior axially projecting post ~~hub~~ disposed within said opening ~~for~~ receiving at least a portion of said piercing tip embedded therein when said cap is removed from said lancet body, reversed and said opening is matingly engaged with said lancet distal end.

22. (previously presented) The lancet of claim 21, wherein said cap further comprises an interior shoulder providing a stop upon engagement with said lancet distal end.